

Interagency Review Lists Soviet Arms Violations

By Paul Mann

Washington—President Reagan has determined through an interagency review that the Soviet Union is in violation or probable violation of a number of arms control obligations and commitments (AW&ST Jan. 16, p. 13). The Administration will not retaliate, however, by abrogating the commitments, some of which were never ratified by the Senate.

The alleged violations, long public, were enumerated in a congressionally ordered secret report. They had drawn renewed and bipartisan congressional attention last spring (AW&ST Apr. 18, 1983, p. 17).

The current report addresses alleged violations pertaining to:

- Testing by the Soviet Union of more than the allowable number of new strategic missiles.
- Status of another Soviet strategic missile.
- Encryption of missile test data needed to verify arms control agreements.
- Illegal deployment of an antiballistic missile phased-array radar.
- Breach of the yield limits on underground nuclear explosions.
- Use of chemical and toxin weapons in Afghanistan and Southeast Asia.
- Failure to provide notification of Warsaw Pact military exercises.

The U. S. raised the issues both in the Standing Consultative Commission, the formal joint body where compliance questions are discussed, and in senior diplomatic channels.

Questioned about the logic of negotiating arms treaties if the Soviets more or less violate what they sign, Secretary of State George P. Shultz demurred from the phrasing of the question.

Saying the Soviets violated every agreement they make is not "a fair statement about them or anyone's characterization of them," Shultz replied. "But we have taken the view that it's important to be realistic in our attitude toward the Soviet Union, to be candid with ourselves, with them and others about how we see it; and

if there are unpleasant facts, to put them forward. And also to be very mindful of our own strength and our alliances and their strength and our capability to defend our values and defend our interests. And on the basis of that, to be ready for reasonable discussion and dialogue with the Soviet Union."

Another State Dept. official offered these details about the alleged violations:

▪ Flight testing of the SSX-25 intercontinental ballistic missile probably violates the Soviet political commitment to observe the unratified second U. S./Soviet strategic arms limitation treaty, SALT 2. Signed in 1979, it confined each party to one new type of light ICBM. The violation is called probable because of a lack of test data, heavily encrypted by the Soviets, and questions about the definition of throw weight, which refers to the deliverable destructive power of a missile.

▪ A large phased-array radar near Krasnoyarsk in the central USSR is almost certainly a violation of the ratified 1972 Antiballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. The radar is deployed well within the Soviet interior, which is prohibited under the treaty, and "the face of the radar essentially points inward. The significance is that this radar could not be used only in an early warning function," which is permissible. "But it could also be used as part of a battle management system for a large-scale Soviet ABM system" (AW&ST Dec. 5, 1983, p. 15; Nov. 14, 1983, p. 23). The Soviets assert that the installation is a space track radar, which under the ABM treaty can be deployed anywhere inside the country. The State Dept. official said the radar "is not, in the judgment of specialists, optimized for space track."

▪ Available information does not permit a conclusive judgment about whether SS-16 ICBMs are deployed. "Certain activities under way at the Plesetsk testing facility in the Soviet Union lead to the conclusion that SS-16s are probably deployed there." This would mean a probable violation before 1981 of the legal obligation not to defeat the object and purpose of SALT 2 and after 1981 a violation of a political commitment not to undercut SALT 2. When the Reagan Administration came to office it pledged not

to undercut the unratified treaty provided the Soviets did not.

▪ The Administration believes it likely, but is uncertain, that Soviet testing has violated the unratified 1974 Threshold Test Ban Treaty's yield limit of 150 kilotons. Monitoring underground nuclear testing is difficult and depends on complex modeling, the official said. Among 11 Soviet tests, several exceeded 300 kilotons, "so that the mean or median would fall above 150."

The Soviet Union contends that its SSX-25 is not a new missile, but a permissible modification of an existing missile, the SS-13. Even if this were true, the State Dept. official said, the missile breached another provision of the shelved SALT 2 treaty regarding a ratio involving reentry vehicle weight and missile throw weight.

He said that the Soviets had charged the U. S. with violations. In their view, U. S. deployment in Europe of ground-launched cruise missiles violated a SALT 2 protocol prohibiting them. "Of course, that protocol has run out, had the treaty been ratified, so we don't consider this a serious objection," the official said.

The Soviets also have charged that U. S. radars could perform ABM battle management, "but the fact is that those radars are consistent with the ABM treaty and they are deployed on the periphery of the U. S. and they look outward," he said.

Sen. James A. McClure (R.-Idaho), author of the amendment requiring the interagency report on the Soviet compliance record, said after a State Dept. and Central Intelligence Agency briefing on the issue that he will request a closed session of the Senate for a similar briefing. He also called on the Administration to furnish the public with a presidential white paper and issue additional reports "to cover all Soviet arms control violations." □